CMS' RDS Program E-Newsletter

June 2006 Volume 2, Number 6

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RDS Center
Home page for the CMS RDS Center
http://rds.cms.hhs.gov/

CMS Coordination of Benefits/VDSA Web Site
Home page for information on submitting retiree files through the Voluntary Data Sharing Agreement
http://new.cms.hhs.gov/EmployerServices/03_EmployerVDSA.asp

CMS Employer Page
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Web Site specifically for employers
http://www.cms.hhs.gov/EmplUnionPlanSponsorInfo/

Contact Us:

http://rds.cms.hhs.gov

CMS' RDS Center Announces Release of Cost Report & Payment Request Functionalities

CMS' RDS Center is pleased to announce the addition of new functionality to the RDS Secure Web Site. Effective Saturday, July 1, 2006 Plan Sponsors may report costs and request payments for their qualified covered retirees. For specific information on how to perform the cost reporting and payment request steps, refer to the How To Submit Cost Data and How To Submit an Interim Payment Request documents on the RDS Program Web Site.

RDS Reporting Cost and Requesting Payment Training Webinar

An RDS Reporting Cost and Requesting Payment Training Webinar was held on **Thursday, June 29, 3:00pm Eastern Standard Time**. The objective of this RDS Outreach training event was to prepare RDS Secure Web Site users for the Reporting Cost and Requesting Payment functionality, which was introduced Saturday, July 1, 2006.

The June 29, 2006 RDS Reporting Cost and Requesting Payment Training Webinar playback is now available both as streaming Internet video and as a download file for offline viewing. For more information on how to access the playback, go to the webinar announcement on the Program Web Site.

Changing Benefit Option Types: Fully Insured and Self Funded

Effective June 23, Plan Sponsors may now change the Benefit Option Type on submitted applications from Fully Insured to Self Funded, or vice versa, if necessary. Some Plan Sponsors advised the RDS Center they had incorrectly submitted their applications with the incorrect plan type, therefore we included this functionality in the RDS Secure Web Site.

To change the Benefit Option Type, go to the Benefit Options Summary page and select the Benefit Option Name for which you would like to

RDS@cms.hhs.gov
(877) RDS-HELP or
(877) 737-4357
(877) RDS-TTY0 or
(877) 737-8890

change the type. Change the Benefit Option Type and select Continue. You are not required to resubmit the application and the change will take effect immediately. You are only able to change the Benefit Options Type **before** costs are submitted. Once a cost file is received and applied to a Benefit Option, the Benefit Option Type may no longer be changed.

RDS National Conference Call

An RDS National Conference Call was held on Thursday, June 22, 2006.

The topic of this call was "Vendors and the RDS Program." Specifically, we addressed the following topics a Vendor must be familiar with when supporting Plan Sponsors in the RDS Program:

- Sending retiree data to the RDS Center
- Receiving retiree data from the RDS Center
- Processing retiree data received from the RDS Center
- Preparing retiree cost data
- Registering as a Vendor with the RDS Center
- Sending cost data to the RDS Center

The PowerPoint (ppt) format includes voiceover, which is strictly an audio file. The transcript of the voiceover cannot be printed. The voiceover portion of the presentation starts on the second slide.

The PDF (pdf) format does not include the voiceover, but can be downloaded and printed.

Note: Due to the size of the presentation and/or the speed of your connection, it may take up to 5 minutes to download.

Downloads

- Conference Call Presentation with Voiceover (ppt, 39.3 MB)
- Conference Call Presentation (pdf, 243 KB)
- Accessible Conference Call Presentation (pdf, 196 KB)

How to Prepare RDS Cost Data

The RDS Center would like to direct your attention to the new How to Prepare Cost Data document. This document explains what drug cost data is eligible for the RDS Program, how to prepare the cost data for submission to the RDS Center, how to accumulate threshold and limit reductions, how to revise previously submitted cost data, and more.

Sending Mainframe Test Cost Reports to the RDS Center

Effective June 8, 2006, the RDS Center is prepared to start accepting mainframe test cost reports from Plan Sponsors and Vendors. Before sending any mainframe test cost files, please contact the RDS Help Line to ensure your connection has been established properly, and any other set-up requirements are met. Additionally, please review the mainframe cost report detailed information before sending your cost data, to ensure your test is as productive as possible. Once you have sent your mainframe cost test file to the RDS Center, the RDS Center will contact you with the results of your test file within 10 business days.

As a reminder, Vendors may send cost reports via the mainframe; however, a Vendor ID is required. To request a Vendor ID, the Vendor will need to call the RDS Center to initiate the registration process. If a Vendor currently has a Vendor ID related to the RDS retiree file processing, the RDS Center will allow them to use their current Vendor ID; however, they still need to call the RDS Center for confirmation. If a Vendor plans on submitting cost data both mainframe and data entry, they will need a Vendor ID for each cost reporting method. Also, make sure the proper Vendor ID is assigned to the benefit option in which the Vendor is submitting cost data. For more information about assigning Vendor ID to benefit options, view the How To Complete Payment Setup.

Plan Sponsors wanting to submit mainframe cost files to the RDS Center do not need a Vendor ID; however, they are still required to contact the RDS Help Line to ensure they are setup properly to transmit the cost data.

For more detailed information about sending Mainframe Cost Data, go to: http://rds.cms.hhs.gov/news/announcements/sending_mainframe.htm

Helpful Tips

This section is intended to provide you with helpful tips about relevant RDS topics. The focus of this month's "Helpful Tips" section answers the common Submitting Cost Data questions and provides helpful resources.

- Interim cost reports may only be accepted on applications that meet the following conditions.
    - Application must have been submitted and approved.
    - Payment Setup must be complete for the application (Step 6 of Payment Setup must have a status of "Complete").
    - The payment frequency associated with the application must be monthly, quarterly, or interim annual. Note: Plan Sponsors with an annual payment frequency may only submit final costs in the reconciliation file format (guidance on reconciliation functionality will be provided

in the future). The payment frequency selected and submitted on the application is in effect for the duration of the Sponsor's plan year and cannot be changed.
  - The Plan Sponsor has not already submitted the maximum number of payment requests for the application.

- Account Managers, Plan Sponsor Designees, and/or Vendor Designees may enter costs using data entry method for those benefit options that they have been assigned the Cost Reporting privilege. Authorized Representatives cannot submit costs since the Authorized Representative is always a Payment Requestor for the application.

- Anyone is eligible to participate in the cost submission process when using Mainframe to Mainframe if they have contacted the RDS Center and followed the appropriate instructions to report costs using mainframe. For detailed information on how to report costs via mainframe, go to: How to Complete Payment Setup.

- All costs must be submitted within 15 months after the end of the plan year. Cost Report(s) are required prior to the submission of a new interim payment request.

- Cost Reports may be submitted to the RDS Center by two methods: mainframe transmission or data entry on the RDS Secure Web Site. Vendors will specify their cost reporting methods when registering with the RDS Center. All Vendors must call the RDS Center to obtain a Vendor ID regardless of whether they are submitting via mainframe or data entry on the RDS Secure Web Site.

  The Account Manager or Authorized Representative will specify the reporting method for Cost Reporters not associated with Vendors during Payment Setup. Any cost report that is submitted using a submission method other than the submission method indicated in the payment setup will be rejected. For more information about Payment Setup, go to: How to Complete Payment Setup.

- A single mainframe file received from a Vendor may include data for multiple Plan Sponsor IDs (files from Plan Sponsors may only include one Plan Sponsor ID). Additionally, you may submit more than one Application ID in the same file, but they must be separated by an Application Trailer and start with another Application Header. Finally, you may submit multiple months of cost data for the same Unique Benefit Option Identifier (UBOI), but they must be separate detail lines. Files may contain multiple months of newly reported and/or corrected costs.

- Once a Cost Reporter submits costs under any Benefit Option on an application, the Cost Reporter cannot change their privilege to request payment. The Cost Reporter is locked into the Cost Reporter role for the life of that application.